

A FORGIVING SPIRIT.

Dr. Talmage Placates the World's Revenges.

The Recommends More of the Saccharine and Less of the Sour in Human Dispositions—Forgiveness Before Sundown.

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In this discourse Dr. Talmage placates the world's revenges and recommends more of the saccharine and less of the sour in human dispositions; text, Ephesians, 4:26: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

What a pillow, embroidered of all colors, hath the dying day! The cradle of clouds from which the sun rises is beautiful enough, but it is surpassed by the many colored mauve in which at evening it is buried.

Sunset among the mountains! It almost takes one's breath away to recall the scene. The long shadows stretching over the plain make the glory of the departing light on the tiptop crags and struck aslant through the foliage the more conspicuous. Saffron and gold, purple and crimson commingled. All the castles of cloud in conflagration. Burning Moscovs on the sky. Hanging gardens of roses at their deepest blush. Banners of vapor, red as if from carnage, in the battle of the elements. The hunter among the Adirondacks. The Swiss villager among the Alps know what is a sunset among the mountains. After a storm at sea the rolling grandeur into which the sun goes down to bathe at nightfall is something to make weird and splendid dreams out of for a lifetime. Alexander Smith in his poem compares the sunset to "the barren bench of hell," but this wonderful spectacle of nature makes me think of the burnished wall of Heaven. Paul in his prison, writing my text, remembers some of the gorgeous sunsets among the mountains of Asia Minor and how he had often seen the towers of Damascus blaze at the close of the oriental days, and he flashes out that memory in the text when he says: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Sublime, all suggestive duty for people then and people now! Forgiveness before sundown! He who never feels the throb of indignation is imbecile. He who can walk among the injustices of the world inflicted upon himself and others without flush of cheek, or flash of eye, or agitation of nature, is either in sympathy with wrong or semi-idiotic. When Ananias, the high priest, ordered the constables of the courtroom to smite Paul on the mouth, Paul fired up and said: "God shall smite thee, thou white wall!" In the sentence before my text Paul commands the Ephesians: "Be ye angry and sin not." It all depends on what you are mad at and how long the feeling lasts whether anger is right or wrong. Life is full of exasperations. Saul after David, Simeon after Gideon, Korah after Moses, the Pharisees after Christ, and everyone has had his pursuers, and we are swindled or belied or misrepresented or persecuted or in some way wronged, and the danger is that thoughtful indignation shall become baleful spite and that our feelings settle down into a prolonged outpouring of temper displeasing to God and ruinous to ourselves, and hence the important injunction of the text: "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Why that limitation to one's anger? Why that period of flaming vapor set to punctuate a flaming disposition? What has the sunset to do with one's resentful emotions? Was it a haphazard sentiment written by Paul without special significance? No, no! I think of five reasons why we should not let the sun set before our temper.

First, because 12 hours is long enough to be cross about any wrong inflicted upon us. Nothing is so exhausting to physical health or mental faculty as a protracted indulgence of ill humor. It racks the nervous system. It hurts the digestion. It heats the blood in brain and heart until the whole body is first overheated and then depressed. Besides that, it sours the disposition, turns one aside from his legitimate work, expends energies that ought to be better employed and does us more harm than it does our antagonist. Paul gives us a good, wide allowance of time for legitimate denunciation, from six o'clock to six o'clock, but says: "Stop there!" Watch the descending orb of day, and when it reaches the horizon take a reef in your disposition. Unloose your collar and cool off. Change the subject to something delightfully pleasant. Unroll your tight fist and shake hands with some one. Bank up the fires at the curfew bell. Drive the growling dog of enmity back to its kennel. The hours of this morning will pass by, and the afternoon will arrive, and the sun will begin to set, and I beg you, on its blazing hearth throw all your feuds, ineffectives and satires.

Other things being equal, the man who preserves good temper will come out ahead. An old writer says that the celebrated John Henderson, of Bristol, England, was at a dining party where political excitement ran high and the debate got angry, and while Henderson was speaking his opponent, unable to answer his argument, dashed a glass of wine in his face, when the speaker deliberately wiped the liquid from his face and said: "This, sir, is a digestion. Now, if you please, for the main argument." While worldly philosophy could help but very few of such equipoise of spirit, the grace of God could help any man to such a triumph. "Impossible," you say. "I would have either left the table in anger or have knocked the man down." But I have come to believe that nothing is impossible if God help.

Aye, you will not postpone till sundown forgiveness of enemies if you can

realize that their behavior toward you may be put in the catalogue of the "all things" that "work together for good to those that love God." I have had multitudes of friends, but I have found in my own experience that God has so arranged it that the greatest opportunities of usefulness that have been opened before me were opened by enemies. So you may harness your antagonists to your best interests and compel them to draw you on to better work and higher character. Suppose, instead of waiting until 32 minutes after four this evening, when the sun will set, you transact this glorious work of forgiveness at meridian.

Again, we ought not to let the sun go down on our wrath, because we will sleep better if we are at peace with everybody. Insomnia is getting to be one of the most prevalent of disorders. How few people retire at ten o'clock at night and sleep clear through to six in the morning! To relieve this disorder all narcotics and sedatives and morphine and cocaine and intoxicants are used, but nothing is more important than a quiet spirit if we would win somnolence. How is a man going to sleep when he is in mind pursuing an enemy? With what nervous twitch he will start out of a dream! That new plan of cornering his foe will keep him wide awake while the clock strikes 11, 12, 1, 2. I give you an unfailing prescription for wakefulness: Spend the evening hours rehearsing your wrongs and the best way of avenging them. Hold a convention of friends on this subject in your parlor or office at eight or nine o'clock. Close the evening by writing a bitter letter expressing your sentiments. Take from the desk or pigeonhole the papers in the case to refresh your mind with your enemy's meanness. Then lie down and wait for the coming of the day, and it will come before sleep comes, or your sleep will be worried quiescence and, if you take the precaution to lie flat on your back, a frightful nightmare.

Why not put a bound to your animosity? Why let your foes come into the sanctities of your dormitory? Why let those slanderers who have already torn your reputation to pieces or injured your business bend over your midnight pillow and drive from you one of the greatest blessings that God can offer—sweet, refreshing, all invigorating sleep? Why not fence out your enemies by the golden bars of the sunset? Why not stand behind the barricade of evening cloud and say to them: "Thus far and no farther." Many a man and many a woman is having the health of body as well as the health of soul eaten away by the malevolent spirit. I have in time of religious awakening had persons night after night come into the inquiry room and get no peace of soul. After awhile I have bluntly asked them: "Is there not some one against whom you have a hatred you are not willing to give up?" After a little confusion, they have slightly whispered: "Yes." Then I have said: "You will never find peace with God as long as you retain that virulence."

Again, we ought not to allow the sun to set before forgiveness takes place, because we might not live to see another day. And what if we should be ushered into the presence of our Maker with a grudge upon our soul? The majority of people depart this life in the night. Between 11 o'clock p. m. and three o'clock a. m. there is something in the atmosphere which relaxes the grip which the body has on the soul, and most people enter the next world through the shadows of this world. Perhaps God may have arranged it that way so as to make the contrast the more glorious. I have seen sunshiny days in this world that must have been almost like the radiance of Heaven. But as most people leave the earth between sundown and sunrise they quit this world at its darkest, and Heaven, always bright, will be the brighter for that contrast. Out of darkness into irradiation.

Shall we then leap over the roseate bank of sunset into the favorite hunting ground of disease and death, carrying our animosities with us? Who would want to confront his God, against whom we have all done meaner things than anybody has ever done against us, carrying old grudges? How can we expect His forgiveness for the greater when we are not willing to forgive others for the less? Napoleon was encouraged to undertake the crossing of the Alps because Charlemagne had previously crossed them. And all this rugged path of forgiveness bears the bleeding footsteps of Him who conquered through suffering, and we ought to be willing to follow. On the night of our departure from this life into the next our one plea will have to be for mercy, and it will have to be offered in the presence of Him who has said: "If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."

What a sorry plight if we stand there hating this one and hating that one and wishing that one a damage and wishing some one else a calamity, and we ourselves needing forgiveness for 10,000 obliquities of heart and life. When our last hour comes, we want it to find us all right.

Hardly anything affects me so much in the uncovering of Pompeii as the account of the soldier who, after the city had for many centuries been covered with the ashes and scoriae of Vesuvius, was found standing in his place on guard, hand on spear and helmet on head. Others fled at the awful submergence, but the explorer, 1,700 years after, found the body of that brave fellow in right position. And it will be a grand thing if, when our last moment comes, we are found in right position toward God, on guard and unafraid by the descending ashes from the mountains of death. I do not suppose that I am any more of a coward than most people, but I declare to you that I would not dare to sleep tonight if there were any being in all the earth with whom I would not gladly

shake hands, lest during the night hours my spirit dismissed to other realms, I should, because of my unforgiving spirit, be denied Divine forgiveness.

"But," says one woman, "there is a horrid creature that has so injured me that rather than make up with her I would die first." Well, sister, you may take your choice, for one or the other it will be—your complete pardon of her or God's eternal banishment of you. "But," says some man, "that fellow who cheated me out of those goods or damaged my business credit or started that lie about me in the newspapers by his perfidy broke up my domestic happiness, forgive him I cannot, forgive him I will not." Well, brother, take your choice. You will never be at peace with God till you are at peace with man. Feeling as you now do, you would not get so near the harbor of Heaven as to see the lighthouse. Better leave that man with the God who said: "Vengeance is mine, I will repay." You may say: "I will make him sweat for that yet; I will make him squirm; I mean to pursue him to the death," but you are damaging yourself more than you damage him, and you are making Heaven for your soul an impossibility. If he will not be reconciled to you, be reconciled to him. In five or six hours it will be sundown. The dahlias will bloom against the western sky. Somewhere between this and that take a shovel and bury the old quarrel at least six feet deep. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath."

Oh, it makes one feel splendid to be able by God's help to practice unlimited forgiveness. It improves one's body and soul. My brother, it will make you measure three or four more inches around the chest and improve your respiration so that you can take a deeper and longer breath. It improves the countenance by scattering the gloom and makes you somewhat like God himself. He is omnipotent, and we cannot copy that. He is independent of all the universe, and we cannot copy that. He is creative, and we cannot copy that. He is omnipresent, and we cannot copy that. But He forgives with a broad sweep all faults, and all neglects, and all insults, and all wrongdoings, and in that way we may copy Him with mighty success. Go harness that sublime action of your soul to the sunset—the hour when the gate of Heaven opens to let the day pass into the eternities, and some of the glories escape this way through the brief opening. We talk about the Italian sunsets and sunset amid the Appennines and sunset amid the cordilleras, but I will tell you how you may see a grander sunset than any mere lover of nature ever beheld; that is, by flinging into it all your hatreds and animosities, and let the horses of fire trample them, and the chariots of fire roll over them, and the spearmen of fire stab them, and the beach of fire consume them, and the billows of fire overwhelm them.

Again, we should not let the sun go down on our wrath, because it is of little importance what the world says of you or does to you when you have the affluent God of the sunset as your provider and defender. People talk as though it were a fixed spectacle of nature and always the same. But no one ever saw two sunsets alike, and if the world has existed 6,000 years there have been about 2,100,000 sunsets, each of them as distinct from all the other pictures in the gallery of the sky as Titian's "Last Supper," Rubens' "Descent from the Cross," Raphael's "Transfiguration" and Michael Angelo's "Last Judgment" are distinct from each other. If that God is of such infinite resources that he can put on the wall of the sky each evening more than the Louvre and Luxembourg galleries all in one is my God and your God, our provider and protector, what is the use of our worrying about any human antagonism? If we are misinterpreted, the God of the many-colored sunset can put the right color on our action. If all the garments of the western heavens at eventide is but the upholstery of one of the windows of our future home, what small business for us to be chasing enemies! Let not this Sabbath sun go down upon your wrath.

Mohammed said: "The sword is the key of Heaven and hell." But, my hearers, in the first day we will find just the opposite of that to be true, and that the sword never unlocks Heaven, and that he who heals wounds is greater than he who makes them, and that on the same ring are two keys—God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of enemies—and these two keys unlock paradise.

And now I wish for all of you a beautiful sunset to your earthly existence. With some of you it has been a long day of trouble, and with others of you it will be far from calm. When the sun rose at six o'clock, it was the morning of youth, and a fair day was prophesied, but by the time the noonday or middle life had come and the clock of your earthly existence had struck 12, cloud racks gathered, and tempest bellowed in the track of tempest. But as the evening of old age approaches, I pray God the skies may brighten and the clouds be piled up into pillars as of celestial temples to which you go, or move as with mounted cohorts come to take you home. And as you sink out of sight below the horizon, may there be a radiance of Christian example lingering long after you have gone, and as the heavens be written in letters of sapphire and on the waters in letters of opal and on the hills in letters of emerald: "Thy sun shall no more go down, neither shall the moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." So shall the sunset of earth become the sunrise of Heaven.

A Gordian Knot. Dasherly—I understand that he's very well connected. Flasherly—You bet! He's tied to his wife's apron strings.—Kansas City Independent.

WRITES ABOUT HOME

Reflections of Bill Arp on Returning from His Trip.

Hotel Porter Had Failed to Wake Him, So He Was Twenty-Four Hours Late—Arp's Letters Criticized.

Left, left, left! That is an ominous word—I don't like it. Last Friday night I closed my mission down in Alabama—a most delightful week with balmy weather, moonlight nights and good people to cheer me. I retired happy to dream of home and the little grandchildren and the light that would be shining in the window for me on Saturday night.

The porter was to call me up in time to take the two o'clock train for Chattanooga, but alas! he did not do it, and I awoke to find that the train had passed and I was left, left, left—Oh! the misery of it. Shakespeare says that there is no philosopher can endure the toothache patiently, and I will add, or being left by a train when far from home. There is a goodness about it, for the train has gone.

The next train would not connect at Chattanooga and I would have to stay there till another two o'clock in the morning. But all's well that ends well. About daylight I reached my home. All was still and silent. The good old dog was lying at the door and gently wagged his bushy tail. The door was locked, but the window sash was not, and I raised it slowly and softly and was soon in the sitting room, where there was a good, comfortable sofa. I knew that the door to our family bedroom was locked, and I heard some faint, familiar nasal sounds that assured me all was well. The diagnosis was right. In a few minutes I was asleep and playing on the harmonium myself. My heavy base echoed to the tenor in the other room and awakened one of the girls, who whispered: "Mamma, mamma, there is somebody in the front room."

"It's your papa," said she. "I know his trombone—he still and let him sleep, for I expect he is almost worn out." It was eight o'clock when somebody kissed me while I was dreaming of the soldier boys drilling and the officer said left, left, left at every step. Rousing up I received the family embraces, and two little children came running in and climbed all over me and made me happy—Oh, it beats war, or politics, or a dog law, or anything. I was escorted into the dining-room for breakfast and saw at a glance that the room had been repapered with a tinted olive green paper and the bordering matched it beautifully. The doors to the parlor were wide open, and that room had been repapered, too, and was lovely.

Somehow I never could make as much ado over pleasant surprises as my female folks expect, but I did my best and have expressed my admiration several times since. Before I left they had talked about the old paper that had gotten dirty and was falling off and said that if I would get the paper they would put it on, and I assented. I am glad that I did, for if I had been at home they would have put the harness on me and made me wait on them all day, for I am the boy.

I met a man down in Alabama who said that my letters were demoralizing the women of this country and putting new burdens on the men. "Why," said he, "just look at me—I am 55 years old and weigh nine on to 200 pounds, and yet my wife wanted me to climb up a step ladder yesterday and fix the curtains back, and I told her I couldn't, and I wouldn't, for the ladder was old and rickety, and I might fall and break my neck or some of my arms and legs. Well, sir, she laughed and said: 'Bill Arp! climbs ladders for his wife, and plants flowers, and strawberries, and nurses the grandchildren, too.' 'Yes,' said I, 'that's what he writes, but I don't believe a word of it. He thinks that you women are going to be allowed to vote pretty soon and he is just fixing to be elected.' 'Now, see here, Mr. Arp, I fought four years in that dogged old war and now I'm getting old and fat and I'm not going to climb ladders and tend the flower garden just because you do; that is, if you really do it, which I don't believe.' And the good, jolly old veteran laughed immensely.

Next day I made acquaintance with a conductor on the Alabama Great Southern and he comforted me by saying that my letters gave good example and good cheer and pictured what home ought to be. Said he: "We have nine children at our house—all under age, and my greatest pleasure is in meeting them when my run is off, and in helping them and their mother to fight the battle of life and be contented and enjoy what we have got and be thankful to God for His tender mercies. Running a train half night and half day is hard work, but I enjoy my home and my family all the more when I get with them, and they are all the gladder to see me."

I like that man and that kind of talk. When our people realize that home is the best place on earth, and the mother is its dearest inmate we will have an ideal commonwealth. Coleridge says: "A mother is a mother still. The holiest thing alive." Lyttleton says: "The lover in the husband may be lost. But the wife is dearer than the bride."

All the great poets have paid tribute to the home and to the mother, for home is not home without a mother. Of course there are many married women who are not mothers and do not wish to be. With them children are intruders, and the pity

is that their mothers had not been of similar mind. In New England and fashionable northern circles the maternal instinct has been smothered, and has gone into an innocuous desuetude," as Mr. Cleveland would say. And good, gentle Tom Howard said that a Boston mother wouldn't have but one or two children, and she wouldn't have any if she didn't want an heir to inherit the estate.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox wrote a remarkable letter two years ago on the decay of the maternal instinct in New England, and the great increase in divorces and voluntary separations. Mary Brent Reed has recently published an article on the same subject as applicable to France. She says that the fashionable women of the period won't even dress like women. They despise hips and try to hide them. They prefer to be as slim as race horses, and to conceal every sign of a maternal form. Children are intruders, they say; and if by chance they have any they are put out to nurse and to be reared by unmotherly hands. What an awful picture that is—what a sad descent from the motherhood of our mothers—what a counterpart to the Saviour's teaching when He said: "Suffer little children to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven." Nearly all the great men of the world have been nursed by noble mothers, and it rejoices me to know that Mrs. Sarah Butts, of Brunswick, has a book now in press with Lippincott that will rescue from oblivion the mothers of many of Georgia's great and good men. With her it has been a labor of love. How our biographers, from Moses down, have lauded the great men but paid small tribute to their mothers.

But the highest Heaven is reserved for them, and an eternal fame that will not pass away like that the great men acquire in this changeable world. Alas, poor Dewey; how soon did his garlands wither. But we still have Schley and Brumby and Hobson left, and a host of lesser lights that illuminate the southern sky.—Bill Arp, in Atlanta Constitution.

THE LIFE INSURANCE CURE. A Dying Bachelor Who Became Interested in a Plan for a Novel Funeral.

I don't know that life insurance is a cure for disease, said the retired life insurance collector, but I know of an instance which makes it look that way. In the town where I first began business was a bachelor of about 50 years, who was quite alone in the world, and had some years before taken out a \$5,000 policy on himself for the benefit of a maiden sister, who had died a year before the events of this story. He kept his policy going, however, because it was a good way to save money, and one day he was taken down with some kind of fever. He grew worse day after day, until one day the doctor told him that he would in all likelihood be dead within the next 24 hours.

This suggested his life insurance money, all he had to leave, and he immediately began to talk with the doctor on the subject of a proper disposal of it. He concluded after some thought that the best thing to do with it was to blow it in on a tremendous big funeral for himself, including a banquet for all the people he knew. This was an entirely new idea for a funeral, and when the doctor left him that night to the care of his nurse, his mind was entirely occupied with his funeral. He talked to the nurse about it, and when the nurse made him stop he lay and thought about it. In fact, he became so much interested in the details of his funeral that he quite forgot about having to die to make it possible.

In the morning when the doctor came he found his patient in a mild perspiration and his pulse beating in much better fashion than it had been doing for some days. He also found the general condition of the patient much improved. He was greatly astonished and at once began to ask questions. The patient told him with eager interest of a lot of new things he had thought of for the funeral and some that bothered him a good deal and said he had been thinking of it all night. Then the doctor laughed and told him he guessed the funeral would have to be postponed, for he wasn't going to die, just then anyhow. Nor did he, and he isn't dead yet, but he is married and has his policy paid up for his wife's benefit.—N. Y. Sun.

Dovetailed. Prof. Charles G. D. Roberts, the poet, reads the modern languages very easily, but speaks them imperfectly. At a reception held in New York just prior to his leaving for Europe, Roberts was introduced to a distinguished French artist, who was here on a visit. The artist asked in his own tongue: "You speak French?"

"No," answered the poet; "I am sorry I do not, but I understand it well when it is spoken to me."

"I am so glad," replied the Frenchman; "you are the audience I have long wanted. I can talk to you all I please and you cannot talk back!"—Saturday Evening Post.

Cherry Pudding. 1 box of gelatine dissolved in a little boiling water, 1 quart of canned cherries sweetened to taste, grated rind and juice of two large lemons, 1 cup of sherry. Strain the gelatine and stir all together, adding the lemon juice and wine last. Mould and serve with sweetened whipped cream, to which a little currant jelly may be added.

Felt Safe. "Why do you stand staring at that steam engine all the time? Why not look at the other display?"

"No, I'll remain here. This is something my wife will not ask me to buy."—Fliegende Blaetter.

New Pass in Rocky Mountains. After numerous hairbreadth escapes and many thrilling adventures, a party of explorers in the Rocky Mountains stumbled onto a pass where they had believed it possible for none to exist. In a like manner, people who have believed dyspepsia incurable are astonished to find that there is a way to health. Hostetter's Stomach Bitters used faithfully makes the digestion strong, the bowels regular, the liver active. Try it.

A Small Boy's Sarcasm. Aunt Jane wanted to study, but little Willie wanted to ask questions. After answering a few, auntie told Willie not to talk or make a noise. There was a dead silence on Willie's part for a moment, then in a plaintive voice he said: "I s'pose you don't mind me thinking? You can't hear the thinking machine going, can you?"—Pittsburgh Dispatch.

Most men begin to save after they have spent all.—Ram's Horn.

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